



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

Book review: Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler

Citation for published version:

Barker, A 2011, 'Book review: Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler', *Modern Language Review*, vol. 106, pp. 288-289.
<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5699/modelangrevi.106.1.0288>>

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Published In:

Modern Language Review

Publisher Rights Statement:

© Barker, A. (2011). Book review: Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler. *Modern Language Review*, 106, 288-289

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Review

Author(s): Andrew Barker

Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler by Abigail Gillman

Source: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 106, No. 1 (January 2011), pp. 288-289

Published by: [Modern Humanities Research Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5699/modelangrevi.106.1.0288>

Accessed: 20/12/2013 11:58

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Modern Humanities Research Association is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Modern Language Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

to changes in the literary field with the advent of Expressionism, and partly as a result of his new position as an established poet, he shifted his habitus, now preferring to model himself as a prophet. In each case, King traces a continuity in the imagery used to discuss Rilke's authorship and works, from a poetic source (*Das Stunden-Buch* and the prophet poems in *Neue Gedichte* respectively), through his correspondence in general—and, in the case of the 'prophet' complex of images, letters clearly intended to steer the reception of his works (the 'Jubelbriefe' with which he announced the completion of the *Duineser Elegien*)—to the posthumous memorial literature written by friends and acquaintances, and finally the critical literature and more popular modes of reception up to the present day.

This is a rich and fascinating study which deserves the attention of anybody interested in Rilke or, more generally, in the German literary field of the early twentieth century. For not only does King make an important contribution to exposing and dismantling myths about Rilke which continue to this day to be perpetuated by some admirers and detractors; she also offers a sophisticated and persuasive account of how Rilke himself helped to create myths which, even when deconstructed, retain their power.

GLASGOW

HELEN BRIDGE

Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler. By ABIGAIL GILLMAN. (Refiguring Modernism, 10) University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press. 2009. x+225 pp. \$60. ISBN 978-0-271-03409-6.

In this exquisitely produced book, the publisher's blurb claims that Abigail Gillman 'challenges the conventional understanding of modernism as simply a break from tradition'. However, in a Viennese context it has long been the accepted wisdom, indeed it has become a truism, that modernism there was uniquely linked with a genuine love of the past. Arnold Schönberg's reverence for the classical tradition from Bach to Brahms is a salient example of a Jewish modernist's reluctance to be an iconoclast. This should have emerged more clearly in a book whose intended readership is not entirely obvious: the choice of texts would seem to imply a specialist audience, but quotations are given in English only.

The author apparently reflects a Krausian position when setting out to examine what she terms 'turn-of-the-century maladies such as aestheticism, the crisis of language, and epigonism' (p. 13). Yet in this examination of a series of works by writers with whom the satirist had a mostly fraught relationship, the example of Karl Kraus, and his notorious relationship to Judaism, manages to slip by unmentioned. This is baffling in a work which aspires to examine the *conditio Judaica* in Vienna between 1890 and 1938. Gillman's chosen texts include hardy staples such as Schnitzler's *Professor Bernhardt* (1912) and his problematic novel *Der Weg ins Freie* (1908). Here, as in the examination of Beer-Hofmann's *Die Historie von König David* (1918–33), the reader will find stimulating and revealing contributions to the debate about Jewish identity and its expression

in one of the crucibles of religious and political anti-Semitism. Gillman also deals sensibly and sensitively with the problematic issue of Hofmannsthal's Jewishness (he was a pious Catholic) before examining such rarities as his pantomime *Der Schüler* (1901) and the ballet *Die Josefslegende* (1912), written in co-operation with Richard Strauss. In these somewhat ephemeral, quintessentially non-verbal works, we surely find a direct reflection of Hofmannsthal's reaction to the 'crisis of language' noted above. This found expression above all in the celebrated *Ein Brief* (1902), the so-called 'Chandos Letter', yet this most influential and enduring of Hofmannsthal's works does not even warrant a mention here. When writing about belles-lettres, Gillman adopts a more open and relaxed style than she does when writing about Freud (the selected texts are *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood* (1910), *The Moses of Michelangelo* (1914), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1938); the titles are given only in English translation). These works clearly resonate deeply with the author, but she might have been better advised to conclude her work with their discussion rather than placing it at the beginning.

The author is generous, even effusive, in thanking the numerous scholars, friends, relatives, and institutions who helped shape her work. However, the efforts of no fewer than three research assistants could not prevent factual errors creeping in: it is Bertold Löffler, not Bertholde; Alexander Bain was not an English philosopher, and it is not the case that 'Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal both died in their fifties' (p. 5): Schnitzler was sixty-nine.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

ANDREW BARKER

Friedrich Gundolf — Friedrich Wolters: Ein Briefwechsel aus dem Kreis um Stefan George. Ed. by CHRISTOPHE FRICKER. Cologne: Böhlau. 2009. 273 pp. €29.90. ISBN 978-3-412-20299-6.

This collection of letters between Friedrich Gundolf and Friedrich Wolters, edited by Christophe Fricker, allows public access to the independent (though often connected) communication of two men in Stefan George's inner circle. Their correspondence is, especially in its early phases, both an extended discussion of the publications of the circle (they were co-editors of the first *Jahrbuch für die geistige Bewegung*) and a reflection on the role that George's own 'Staat' played in the lives of the two men and in Germany as a whole. These letters shed additional light on the minute control George exercised over the works that were associated with his circle and over his own self-image. They also add a new perspective to the break between Gundolf and George over Gundolf's relationship with Elisabeth Salomon; Wolters wrote a lengthy letter to Gundolf in February 1923 warning him against the 'Weichherzigkeit' and 'Satan der Schwäche' (p. 233) which could convince him that 'eine privat-persönliche Verpflichtung gegen die geliebte Frau' would be more important than 'die staatlich-persönliche gegen Meister und Freund' (p. 234).

Wolters and Gundolf had in common the fact that both were full professors and active participants in German university life, to which George and the circle had a deeply ambivalent relationship, sometimes valuing the access lectures and